

Object Lessons

Object lessons are a lot like parables. Common everyday things are used to teach a lesson that has deeper spiritual meaning. Object lessons are fun to do, they are engaging, and they are easy to remember.

There are some things to keep in mind when you do an object lesson in Sunday school:

- Keep it simple.
- Have a clear biblical message.
- Involve the children in doing and interpreting the lesson.
- Always have a few Bible passages to look up and talk about. The passages should be carefully selected to drive the lesson home.

There are several ways to involve the children in doing object lessons. Here are some suggestions:

- Have the children prepare and present the lessons.
- Recruit volunteers to help you present the lesson. In fact, many object lessons can be designed around the children so that their active participation is necessary to make the lesson work. This can be a lot of fun for everyone if it is kept simple.
- Draw everyone into the discussion when the follow-up question is asked: "What do you think the lesson means?"
- Have everyone open their Bibles and find the relevant passages. Older children can help younger ones with this if necessary. Let volunteers read the passages aloud.

As a rule, object lessons should be short. In a Sunday school setting they are often used as start-up or wrap-up activities. In either case, ten to fifteen minutes is a good time frame to shoot for. The impact of a lesson can be lost if it drags on too long.

And one more thing. Always practice an object lesson before you do it with the children. Make sure it works the way you want it to.

Journey to Jerusalem – Luke 12:32

Materials:

- A copy of the "Will You Get to Jerusalem?" activity for every student.
- Pencils for everyone.
- A large copy of the "Jerusalem Road Map" to look at later.

Lesson:

Questions: What goal does God want us to reach in life? Read Luke 12:32. What are the chances that we will get to the kingdom by going any way we want to? Let's try it!

Hand out the "Will you get to Jerusalem?" activity to the children. Jerusalem = the kingdom. Carry out the steps together *without using the map*. Let the children make their own choices at every turn. (E.g., at "Step 1" tell the children to circle one of the

four directions. They are free to circle any direction they want. Then do "Step 2" together. Etc.)

Question when you get to Step 4: Only one set of steps leads to Jerusalem. What do you think the chances are that *everybody* got there? Why?

Will You Get to Jerusalem?

You are in the sinful city of Ekron and you must get to Jerusalem. What are the chances that you will get there by taking any route you feel like? Let's try it!

Step 1 – I will leave Ekron by going

NORTH SOUTH EAST WEST (Circle one)

Step 2 – When I get to the first crossroad, I am going to

TURN LEFT TURN RIGHT GO STRAIGHT (Circle one)

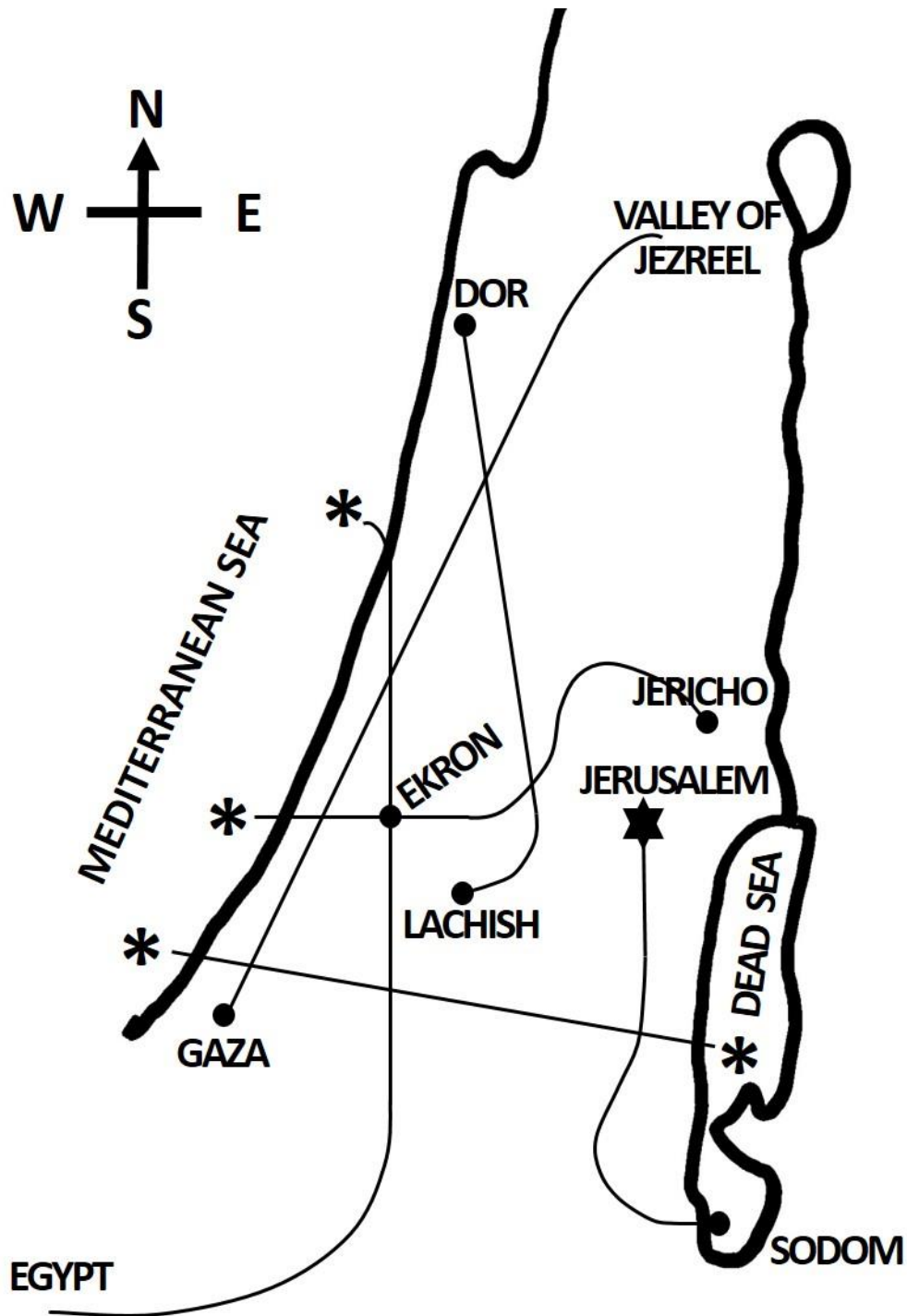
Step 3 – If I get to another crossroad, I think I will

TURN LEFT TURN RIGHT GO STRAIGHT (Circle one)

Step 4 – No more turns. This is the end of your journey.

Now show the map. Let some of the children tell you the steps they took. Follow their steps on the map. Where did they end up?¹

¹ Many Bible maps show Sodom under the southern end of the Dead Sea as this map does. The archaeological work of Dr. Steven Collins, however, has provided compelling evidence that Sodom was located in the fertile plains of Moab, across from Jericho. See his book, *Discovering The City Of Sodom*.



Jerusalem Road Map

Questions: (1) Do people live life like this – going in one direction today and some other direction tomorrow? (2) Where do they end up? (3) What does Jerusalem stand for in this lesson? (4) Is there more than one way to get to the kingdom of God? (5) What road map do we have for getting to the kingdom of God?

Read Psalm 119:35, 59-60, 105-106, 133; Matthew 7:13-14, and 2 Timothy 3:15-17.
Question: What's the lesson?